

THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP, TEACHERS' JUSTICE AND SUPPORT OF AUTONOMY AMONG DISADVANTAGED AND NON-DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Dóra Fanni Szabó

Doctoral School of Educational Sciences, University of Szeged

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Numerous research results show that teachers' behavior, activity and the students' perception of teachers' justice and support of autonomy are strongly related to students' attitudes, motivation and academic performance. Teacher-student interactions are at the core of the teaching-learning process and the relationship between them is an important learning motive (Nagy, 2000). The students who perceive their teachers as treating them fairly are less stressful than those who feel that they are treated unfairly by their teachers (Dalbert and Stoeber, 2005). The aim of the research was the investigation of the relationship between teachers and disadvantaged students, compared to non-disadvantaged pupils, in 4th and 6th grades (N=216). In the sample the ratios of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students were the same in each grade. The student perceptions of teachers' justice and support of autonomy were measured with the Hungarian adaptation (Jámbori, 2003) of the Justice in School Climate Scale (Dalbert and Stoeber, 2002a) and the Teachers' Behavior Scale (Dalbert and Stoeber, 2002b). The participants also rated the teacher related part of the social relationship subscale of the School Self-concept Scale (Orosz and Sztó, 1999), with seven more integrated items. The scales, except for one subsample (6th grade, non-disadvantaged students, Justice in School Climate Scale) worked with acceptable reliability (Cronbach's α = .85 or over). Based on the comparison of mean values, there wasn't found any significant difference between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students in the case of relationship with teachers and perception of teachers' support of autonomy. However, a difference can be found on the Justice in School Climate Scale between them in both grades; the correlation coefficient changes accordingly. There is a moderate level connection between the relationship with teachers and the support of autonomy (between .65–.71), while both of the scales have a weak relation with the perception of justice (.4 or under), in both cases. The teacher-student relationship and the activity of teachers have significant effects on academic success, particularly in the case of students who participated in the research. If we compare the perceptions of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students regarding the behaviour of their teachers, we can contribute to the improvement of educational efficiency and equity.